1: Linton, E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

177 formerly had a few riding oxen. Both of these are due to European
492 contact. The Tsimahety, at the northern end of the plateau, use oxen as pack animals and apparently have done so since pre-European times. The loads are placed in cloth bags, which are slung across the animal behind the hump one hanging on each side.

233 It is safe to say that if all the cattle belonging to the Tanala
556 Menabe were destroyed over night, no member of the tribe would miss a meal or suffer any other serious hardship. Their loss would be somewhat more serious to the Ikongo, but they would still be able to get along quite well without them. In spite of this lack of practical value, cattle are everywhere of great social importance.
[454] With the possible exception of slaves, which no longer exist, they represent the only form of interest-bearing investment possible under native conditions. Every man tries to accumulate as many as possible and his standing in the community is largely determined by
[777] the size of his herd. Charms to increase the fertility of cattle are common and cattle are only sold or killed in case of absolute necessity. They are regarded almost as members of the family and the idiosyncrasies of each animal are well known. One informant told me that they are the only animals which possess souls. They are not regarded
[782] as sacred, but the killing of an ox, either as a sacrifice or for meat, is an integral part of practically all important ceremonies.

685 Although the Tanala consider ordinary theft as one of the most
556 serious of all offenses, cattle stealing is regarded as honorable so long as the members of one's own village are not molested. In fact, it is considered a proper occupation for a young man of spirit and offers an easy road to wealth and advancement. The native attitude is comparable to that of our own Plains Indians toward horse
[721] stealing. Cattle formed the most important part of the spoil in warfare and a successful theft was in the nature of a war exploit. European efforts to suppress it have rather heightened the thief's prestige by increasing his hazards.

541 Bull baiting and watching fighting bulls were both important
764 sports in pre-European times. They still persist, but are becoming rare. I could get no information on bull baiting among the Ikongo, but it was probably a regular part of important funerals there, as among the Menabe. In the latter group it was customary, in the course of the funeral festivities, to drive up one or two bulls. These were baited by the young men, who would incite them to charge and then avoid their rushes, swing by their tails, leap on their backs, etc. A favorite trick was to await the charge, catch the bull's

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horns and vault over his head, alighting on one's feet. The present natives say that the sport was designed to give the young men a chance to exhibit their strength and agility, but its almost exclusive association with funerals suggests that it may once have had a deeper significance. A good bull baiter enjoyed considerable prestige and there were numerous charms to insure success in the sport.

Watching fighting bulls seems to have been a commoner sport among the Ikongo than among the Menabe. There, villages would pit their best bulls against each other and wager heavily on the outcome. The men of the two villages would line up on opposite sides of the arena and beat the ground with heavy sticks to encourage their bulls. Excitement ran high and the meets often broke up in a fight.

In order to incite the bulls a young heifer was sometimes led up. Another method was to collect ticks filled with blood from the bulls themselves. A small patch of ground in the center of the arena was torn up as though bulls had been fighting there and the blood from the ticks squeezed out on it. It is said that when the most cowardly bull saw and smelled this he would stand and give battle.

Goats are much less numerous than cattle and several of the Tanala gentes have taboos on raising them. The few animals I saw were large and shaggy, with long, well-developed horns. Most of them were black, but with a few black and white individuals. Goats are never milked and rarely killed for meat. As far as I could learn, they are never employed for sacrifices, although the gentes who raise them have no taboo against this.

Chickens are numerous in all villages and are the main source of fresh meat. No breeds are recognized and those I saw were of all sizes and colors. They are fed with the refuse of the rice pounding, but have to forage for most of their food and are, in consequence, lean and athletic. Eggs are considered a delicacy. Nests are made for the hens by splitting and spreading one end of a six-foot section of large bamboo, interweaving other bamboo splints to form a crude basket (Fig. 2, b). This is lined with straw. The nests are planted in the ground close to the sides of the dwelling. The overhanging eaves protect them from rain, while the smoothness and height of the bamboo give protection from snakes and other vermin. Sitting hens are usually kept in a corner of the dwelling. Hens with chicks are brought into the house every night until the young are old enough to fly. Grown birds roost on the roofs or in low trees. There are no wild chickens.

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361 778 were used by all the lineages indiscriminately. The tombs were hidden in dense forest, never less than a half hour's march from the village and usually more (see Tombs).

361 764 Villages were moved only if they had been taken and sacked by an enemy, or if an *ombiasy* advised removal. In either case the new site was chosen by an *ombiasy*. The villagers carried along their *tepanony* and buried it in the *kianza* of the new village. The sacred place was abandoned, the sacrifices being performed at temporary altars until deaths had occurred at the new site and memorial stones had been erected. Corpses were carried back to the old tombs for a time, then new tombs were built and all the bodies transferred.

34 778 New villages, as distinct from removals, were founded as a result of quarrels between factions within a village. One or more lineages would secede in a body and settle at a new site. The place would be chosen by an *ombiasy*, who would also concoct a new *tepanony* for them. The new village would continue to use the sacred place and tombs of the old village for a time, but would establish its own as soon as possible.

THE GENS

618 The gens was the largest social or governmental unit recognized by the primitive Tanala. All larger groupings are directly traceable to outside influences. There was no native name for this unit, but each gens was named and considered itself a separate entity. The members of a gens always occupied a continuous territory, the limits of their land being marked by various natural boundaries such as rivers, ridges, etc. Trespass on this territory by members of another gens was cause for war. If, as sometimes happened, one or more lineages migrated to a distance, the emigrants soon lost touch with the parent body and founded a new gens.

In theory, membership in a gens was based on descent from a common ancestor in the male line and each gens had arisen through the gradual expansion of a single lineage. Traditionally, these lineages entered the country separately and at different times, some coming from the coast, others from the plateau. Each lineage founded a village, new lineages and villages arising through increasing population and internal disputes. Actually, the Menabe also recognized descent in the female line as giving gens membership, if it was coupled with residence with the mother's group. Although informants always gave male descent as the basis, all admitted that their own gentes included illegitimate children of gens women and outside fathers,

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769 occupy definite localities, the *zintana* already described, and do not interfere in human affairs except to punish trespass on their territory. They are never appealed to for aid and only receive sacrifices when their land is used, or when it is thought that an illness is due to trespass. They never appear to the living. Although the *zina* now play the role of local spirits, all informants agreed that they are of human origin.

DEATH AND BURIAL

IKONGO BURIAL CUSTOMS

764 The following account of death and burial among the Tanala Ikongo is given in the manuscript of Sadaro Antoine: "If a person is sick enough to cause anxiety the members of the family assemble in the house where he is. If he dies the body is washed in cold water and after the bath the hair is braided and oiled. The bathing and hairdressing are done by relatives of the same sex as the deceased. After the body has been wrapped in *lambas* [mantles] or mats it is carried to the *trano be* [village assembly house] with the head uncovered. A piece of silver is put in the mouth and beads on the neck and hair. After this has been done the family sends for the relatives who live at a distance. The able-bodied men of the family go to the forest to make a *loka* [coffin], a tree trunk hollowed out and provided with four feet, in which to lay the body. One or two cattle are killed, according to the wealth of the family, and the meat distributed among the inhabitants of the village. Sometimes the messengers invite strangers to come to the feast and sometimes an ox is sent to the forest to be eaten by the workers there. When the *loka* is finished the men bring it to the village joyfully. The women and children go out to meet them and lead the way back also rejoicing. The *loka* is placed on the east side of the house, where the body is also laid. The next day the body is placed in it and it is closed with a made cover or plank bound on with vines. It is then hung up in the house. The length of time the body stays in the *trano be* depends on the wealth of the family. Ordinarily it is carried to the *kibory* [clan tomb] after two or three days, but if the family is rich it may hang there ten or fifteen days. During this time the family kills cattle, feasting the village and visitors and burning the fat in the *trano be* to overpower the smell of the decaying body. If the body decomposes and matter drips from the coffin they take it out of the village and empty it, then bring it back. Before the cortege leaves for the *kibory* some people go ahead to prepare food for the

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mpandevina [assistants]. An ox is killed near the tomb and a great deal of rice cooked. Men, women and children follow the cortege to the tomb dancing and singing. After the interment the *mpandevina* take their meal in the open air, returning to the village afterward. To end the fête one or more oxen are killed and the meat distributed to all the assistants. The funeral ceremony is called *mandrava lanona*. A funeral without cattle killing is scorned by the people. 764

"On the day of a funeral, before the cortege leaves for the *kibory* [clan tomb] the chief of the *kibory* stands before the body and makes the following speech: 'Oh thou who art dead, today we are separated forever, not by our wish but by the will of *Zanahary*. We will carry thee to the tomb where thy ancestors rest. Remain there with them and do not return to bring evil into the house. If, however, thy death has been caused by sorcery, may thy ghost quickly slay the evil doer. Do good to us and drive away all diseases.' After the body has been placed in the tomb the chief of the *kibory* or his representative makes the following speech: 'Oh you who are in this house, listen to what I say. We are now sending you so-and-so [giving name], one whom *Zanahary* has taken from us. Receive him to rest with you. Do not let him wander everywhere. Do not scorn him, for he is one of the last little children of one from whom we are all descended.'

"In former times *Mpanzaka* [kings] were usually interred secretly. When a king was ill no one except the members of his family could enter the house where he was. A post, *adiby*, was set up in front of his door as a prohibition to enter. If the king died he was buried secretly that night by the village chiefs and *Notables*. His wives, children and relatives were forbidden to weep or to wear any sign of mourning. If asked how the king was they must answer that he was *mafanafana* [indisposed]. The reason for this was that the tribes were constantly at war and the king was the military leader. If the enemy learned the king was dead they would attack the leaderless tribe and almost certainly defeat it. After some months, during which the people had chosen a new king, guns were fired on the highest hill in the tribe's territory. This announced the death of the king. On learning the sad news everyone wept in the villages. As a sign of grief they unbraided their hair and wore it hanging loose, and dressed in old mats. All the people went to the king's village. There they feasted for several days during which cattle were killed and the meat distributed. The new king was placed in a special house and no one might approach him except the *Anakandriana* 766 643 [72]

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766 643 [village chiefs] and *Notables*. At the end of the fête the new king, accompanied by all the people, left his hiding to enter the *trano be*. There was a great feast, the rejoicing being kept up until morning. Before they returned to their homes the new king gave the people one or two oxen which were killed and the meat distributed.

"Certain kings requested before their death that they should not be buried secretly. In this case the people chose a new king quickly, always from the royal family. The new king was put in a house in a secluded part of the village until the funeral was over. After his election the body of the dead king was placed in the *trano be* surrounded by women of the noble caste. A man of the Antimanga gens lay down close to the body and did not leave it until it was placed in the coffin. The men went to the forest to make a *loka* [coffin]. When it was ready they brought it into the village at night, unknown to the inhabitants. The body was placed in it and hung up in the *trano be*. Next day, at cockcrow, conch shell trumpets were sounded and guns fired in the air to announce the king's death. All the people wept and hastened to the king's village. All bulls which had lived in the same time as the king were killed, the meat distributed among all the people and the fat burned in the *trano be*. [The first part of this passage is not clear. The writer may mean bulls born in the year of the king's ascension or bulls born on the king's birthday.] The neighboring tribes were invited and during fifteen or thirty days tribesmen and strangers alike did nothing but feast. The king's body decomposed in the coffin, which was taken down and emptied from time to time. Sometimes only the bones were left to take to the *kibory*. At the end of the fifteen or thirty days they buried the skeleton and the new king made his solemn entry into the *trano be*."

764 Shaw, who visited the Ikongo shortly after 1870, says: "They make no tombs but bury their dead in the forest with no other mark than a notched tree to keep the spot in remembrance. The carrying of the body to its last resting place is accompanied by yelling and screaming but I saw no ostentatious mourning and weeping, as with the Betsileo. At certain places on the road the body is placed on the ground and a series of games is commenced in which wrestling and spear exercise form an important part. Burying is called 'throwing [113] away the corpse.'" (Shaw, George A., Notes on Ikongo and Its People, Antananarivo Annual, Vol. 1, 1875, p. 69.) Grandidier also says: "The Ikongo do not erect any tombs; they inter their dead in the forest and are content with marking the place by the help of a notch

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cut in the nearest tree. Their funerals are unaccompanied with cries or weeping." (Grandidier, A., Funeral Ceremonies among the Malagasy, Antananarivo Annual, Vol. IV, 1889–92, p. 314.) My own informants denied that the Ikongo buried in this way, insisting that all the gentes used the *kibory* ("gens tomb"). It is possible that the above quotations refer to an ancient form of disposal which is now obsolete, or that it was the practice of only a few clans, or, less probably, that they refer to a temporary disposal prior to the real funeral, like that which still exists among the Menabe.

764 [113]

MENABE BURIAL CUSTOMS

Among the Manandriana division of the Tanala Menabe the funeral ceremonies are practically the same for all people, for in the old days there were no castes. The differences are simply in the expensiveness of the feast. If a family has not enough food to make a good funeral the relatives may quietly take the body to the forest and leave it there until after the rice harvest, when it is brought back, the funeral made, and the bones taken to the tomb. [564]

Immediately after death the body is washed and the hair arranged by relatives of the same sex. If it is a king this is done on the knees of slaves or officers. It is then wrapped in a *lamba* of raffia or of natural colored *hafotra* ("bast"). The latter is called *sembo avoha*. The *lamba* is drawn up over the head but the face is left uncovered. If it should be covered the spirit could not find its road. Some of the other Menabe gentes occasionally wrap the body in a mat rubbed with wood ashes and put it in a large container of folded bark, as a crude attempt at preservation. The body is laid in the middle of the northern half of its own house with the head east. Some gentes consider it a hardship to bury quickly and keep the body in the house as much as a month, burning the fat of cattle to overpower the smell, but the Manandriana keep it only two or three days, never more than a week even for kings. During this time persons under twenty years old are excluded, also, according to one informant, pregnant women. The other people enter the house, mourn and also sing and dance. The songs are funeral chants called *misejo*. While the body lies in the house a few cattle are killed each day to feast the people and quantities of rice are pounded in preparation for the great feast on the day before the interment. Most of the cattle are also saved for this. [766]

On the day before the interment the cattle to be killed are driven to the *kianja* ("village square") and the pounded rice piled up there

764 on mats. A man belonging to the family of either the father or the mother of the deceased makes a *kabary* ("speech") thanking everyone for his sympathy and announcing what each person has given to the bereaved family, together with his name. It is customary for relatives and friends to make small gifts to help defray the funeral expenses. The speaker then thanks everyone again and announces that the interment will take place next morning in such and such a tomb. He also says that anyone who lives at a distance, or who has important business, is now free to return home. After this there is a feast. Cattle are killed and the rice and part of the meat cooked, the rest of the meat being distributed to the people to take home.

The next morning the body is taken to the tomb by the *angoma*, members of the village who always perform this office. In the village [115] of Raindranaivo, my principal informant, there were four of these, but the number does not seem to be fixed. The office is not hereditary and they seem to be chosen for their willingness to enter the tomb and handle the corpses. If an *angoma* is away and a member of his lineage becomes seriously ill he is sent for and is in duty bound to return. Each *angoma* receives a chicken and 2.50 francs for his services.

The body is carried out of the house by the regular door and taken directly to the tomb. If an ordinary person it is usually lashed to a pole, for ease in transport, but if a chief the *angoma* carry it in their hands. The people accompany the body singing and dancing. When they reach the tomb there is a small *kabary* at which those who have come this far are again thanked and told that they can go back as what remains to be done is the work of the *angoma*. They return except for four or five of the closest relatives who remain until the body is placed in the tomb. The *angoma* arrange the bodies in the tomb to make a place for the new corpse and take up the skulls of the parents and grandparents of the deceased, placing them above his body. After the funeral the relatives return to the house of death and stay two or three days, then go home.

766 Only one king of the Menabe, Raindranaivo, is known to have been buried at night and this was done in imitation of the Imerina practice. In further imitation he was buried in a separate tomb, not in that of his gens. He died at a distance and his body was brought back to his capital. He was mourned for three days and buried at midnight.

764 Grandidier says of the Tanala, presumably some of the northern gentes: "The free Tanala do not inter their dead until they have lain

1; Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

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in state for a month or so. For three days they leave the corpse uncovered; but after this they wrap it in red *lambo* [mantles] and place it in a coffin, which they do not carry to the cemetery until the completion of the month. The liquid products of decomposition flow upon the earthen floor of the house and are simply covered with earth. During all the time of the lying-in-state the surviving partner (husband or wife) sleeps in the house as if his or her spouse were still living. This custom obtains also among the Betsimisaraka, Tanosy and other tribes. The coffin is deposited in a solitary place in the forest and is surrounded by a palisade of tree trunks which hides its cover.

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"The *andriana* or chiefs whose ancestors are of foreign (Arab) extraction, are, on the contrary, interred on the very day of their death. The coffin, with a lid in the shape of a roof, on which is fixed a pair of horns, is carried into the dense forest and placed under a kind of shed. An image, suspended in a corner of the house where the death took place, receives for six weeks all the signs of grief and marks of regret from the people, after which it is thrown into the nearest river with great ceremony. The royal cemetery is visited from time to time to renew the coffins when they fall into decay and also to change the *lambo* in which the bones are enveloped." (Grandidier, *op. cit.*, pp. 313–314.)[1] All my Menabe informants denied the existence of most of the features in which the above account differs from my own and I can only assume that the practices described are those of some gens with which I never came in contact.

TOMBS

All the Tanala employ communal tombs known as *fabory*, but there is a good deal of variation in detail. Some of the present differences may be due to the diverse origin of the various gentes, but there can be little doubt that the Tanala burial practices have been influenced by those of their neighbors on the east and west. To make these influences clear it seems best to give a brief description of the tombs used by the tribes bordering on their territory.

764 [554]

The Imerina and Betsileo, who occupy the plateau to the west, employ family vaults. When a man becomes sufficiently rich he will build a tomb for himself and his descendants. This will be used by his children, grandchildren, etc., in the male line until one of them decides to found a tomb of his own. A person who does this acquires great prestige and becomes the ancestor of a new family. New tombs are constantly being erected and the whole line of descendants will

[1] [See p. 173, category 116 = 764 – Analyst]

764 rarely use the same tomb for more than three or four generations. The tombs are always built in prominent places, beside roads, etc. The Imerina sometimes sacrifice at them but the Betsileo do not. Neither group has special persons appointed as tomb guardians.

764 618 778 The tribes of the southeast coast, who border the Tanala on the east, employ gens tombs founded, at least in theory, by the original gens ancestor. No new tombs are founded by individuals and as the gens grows and expands its territory the single tomb comes to be used by a number of villages. The gens tomb is always in a secluded place, surrounded by a grove of trees, and, if possible, near the sacred river. Only the tomb guardian or persons he designates can approach it at ordinary times. It is, however, the center of the religious life of the gens. Important sacrifices are made there and trials for sorcery are held at it. There is an hereditary official known as the *Loky N'dilory* ("chief" or "guardian of the *fidilory*") who is the religious head of the gens with powers approaching those of the secular chief. He not only has charge of the *fidilory* and everything pertaining to it, but offers the sacrifices to the ancestors and punishes infractions of tribal custom, such as incest.

764 The Tanala practices vary between these two extremes without fully arriving at either. In a very general way it may be said that the southern clans lean toward the southeast coast practice while the northern ones lean toward that of the plateau. Among the Tanala Ikongo the *fidilory* almost conforms to the southeastern pattern. Sadaro Antoine says: "The *fidilory* is situated far from villages so that the ghosts will not disturb the tranquillity of the living. It is in a cave. The bodies are laid one upon another with the exception 766 of the *Mpanjaka* [king] who is placed in a coffin on an elevated place to the east. Persons who die of contagious diseases [lepers and smallpox victims] or children who die under a month old are not admitted to the *fidilory*. The latter are buried in marshy ground. Sorcerers are also excluded unless a number of cattle have been killed 764 to rectify the fault. The chief of the *fidilory* is a simple chief of the family but he receives a certain respect from the natives. He makes regulations that no one may burn the forest near where the *fidilory* is located, or enter the forest or cut a single tree in it. Anyone who breaks these rules has to pay a fine of a large ox. When the tomb has to be repaired or when the ancestors wish a new tomb, it is the chief of the *fidilory* who calls the family together to do this. For this work he has to kill many cattle and furnish a quantity of rice for the workers. A sacrifice of twenty or thirty cattle is an average for a

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FTS Tanala FTS

rich family. It is the chief of the hikory who offers the sacrifices and 764
addresses the prayers to the ancestors."

Very little additional information was obtained but this seems to [621]
indicate that all the members of a gens do not necessarily use the same
hikory and I suspect that every village of long standing has one of its
own. The office of guardian of the hikory also seems to be much less
important than among the southeast coast tribes. Early writers say
that the Ikongo simply buried their dead in the forest and it seems
possible that their use of the hikory has been borrowed from the
eastern tribes in comparatively recent times.

Informants from the Tanala Menabe say that some of their 764
northern gentes have true gens tombs which are used by as 613
many as ten or twelve villages. These consist of houses containing
stone lined pits with three compartments. The bodies of men are
placed in one compartment, those of women in another and those of
children in the third. The type would seem to be almost identical
with that used by the southeast coast tribes, but informants thought
that there was no special guardian of the tomb. They were not sure
of this and spoke from hearsay rather than personal knowledge.

Among the rest of the Menabe each village has two or three tombs 764
which are in simultaneous use. As a rule the corpses are put in the [621]
different tombs in rotation, but the village chief or council may also
designate the tomb to be used. New tombs may be built either by
the village as a whole, when the old ones are in danger of becoming
overcrowded, or by individuals. The builder of a tomb acquires [554]
prestige and can specify certain things in regard to it, as that it shall
be used only for men or that the men's and women's bodies shall be
kept separate in it, but its use never seems to be limited to his direct
descendants.

The tombs themselves are of three types: natural caves, rock
shelters and houses. Caves are used when possible and if a good one
is discovered within a reasonable distance of the village the dead are
often moved into it. In the case of rock shelters a large box of heavy
planks with a plank cover is built under the overhang where it will
be protected from the weather. Some of these boxes are said to be
very large, with room for a hundred or more bodies. If neither caves
nor rock shelters are available, the hikory consists of a large rectan-
gular pit lined with dry stone masonry and covered with stone slabs
or planks. The earth is heaped above in a mound and a house built
over the whole. The hikory are always hidden in dense brush at
least a half hour's march from the village.

764 766 The bodies are laid in the tomb with the heads east, without coffins. Men and women are piled together indiscriminately unless the builder of the tomb has specified otherwise. Even chiefs are interred with the rest, although a few of the kings demanded individual tombs in imitation of the Imerina practice. Lepers and smallpox victims are excluded, but in some cases their bones seem to be put in after a few years of temporary interment in the ground. Sorcerers and other criminals are also excluded, their bodies being left [618] for the dogs to eat. It is a universal rule that only members of the gens can be buried in the *kibory*.

769 The tomb is transferred if the village is transferred or if a better site has been found. When the new tomb is ready, the day before the transfer, the two or three most important men of the village come to the tomb and call: "Hallo, so-and-so and so-and-so," giving the names of all the important dead they know, "you are the great ones of the family here. Your tomb and residence here are bad. You know this and we know it too. We are going to transfer you tomorrow to such and such a place. Assemble all the family here, assemble the children and all your baggage, for tomorrow we will go there."

Next morning all the *Fokonolona* ("village council") come to the tomb and kill an ox to the east of it, i.e., by the heads of the dead. They spread out mats with raffia *lambas* ("mantles") on top. They then take out all the bodies and lay them on the *lambas* and sew them up into bundles. The bodies of wives and husbands are sewn up together, when known, all the children are put in one bundle and the oldest dead, who have fallen to pieces, in another. The bundles are then wrapped in mats and tied to carrying poles with vines. It is forbidden to use ropes. A little of the sacrificed ox is grilled and eaten at the old tomb, but most of it is carried along for the feast at the new tomb. If it is a long trip a stop may be made and a meal cooked en route. On the way the people sing and play tricks on each other and sometimes wrestle. One trick is for the man on the rear end of the carrying pole to push suddenly and try to throw the front man down.

When they reach the new tomb all the bodies are put down outside. A special house has been built there and the people spend the night in this, singing and dancing. They feast that night and again the next morning, killing sometimes as many as ten oxen, depending on the wealth of the village. After breakfast they put the bodies in the new tomb. The body of the most important ancestor, except for his skull, is put at the bottom of the pit or last

ERECTION OF MEMORIAL STONES

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Among the Tanala Ikongo a second ceremony for the dead is held some time after the funeral. The interval does not seem to be fixed and may vary from a few months to two years. Sadaro Antoine says: "The *orimbato* or festival commemorating the dead consists in raising one or more stones in memory of a person who has died either in the village or at a distance." There seems to have been a feeling that it was much more necessary for those whose bodies had not been placed in the gens tomb. "It is always celebrated immediately after the harvest of wet rice, i.e., between the months of January and April. The size of the stone depends on the wealth of the dead person or his family. There are some stones more than 8 meters high and more than a meter across. Before the ceremony begins the members of the family are called together to discuss how many professional dancers and musicians will be invited and how many oxen killed and to pound the rice which will be given to the visitors. The festival is begun on a lucky day, a Thursday, at four or five o'clock in the afternoon. All the women assemble in a house called the *trano-bory* [lit. "woman's house"]. The head of the family and the other men assemble to the east of the sacrifice post, *lovaka*. Conch shell trumpets and the *kasiloky* [small double-headed drums, always played in pairs] are sounded three times to assemble the spirits that may be absent. The head of the family then says: 'Oh you [naming the person commemorated] and all the ancestors, your relatives and the whole tribe are celebrating a festival. May the weather be good and none of the people fall ill. Heap up the goods of all your relatives and save them all from ennui.' At the end he asks that the soul of the person for whom the festival is given may be received by the other ancestral souls, for according to the superstition the soul of a person whose fête has not been celebrated is not received by the others. At the sound of the trumpets and *kasiloky* everyone weeps. After this the festival usually lasts three or four days but if the person is rich it continues fifteen or twenty days, during which time they feast and sing and dance to the *kasiloky* and *adalo* [two forms of drum]. The relatives of the dead and some others go to the forest to cut vines and to make a *lakana*, a sort of canoe on which the stone is laid to make it easier to transport and to keep it from breaking." Actually the *lakana* is a crude sledge. "During this time one or two oxen are killed for the stone cutters. After this all the people, accompanied by dancers and drummers, assemble to bring the stone. The men drag it while the women

1: Linton E-6 (1926-27) 1933 FYS Tanala FYS

sing to urge them on. During the transport two or three cattle are killed. When the stone has arrived at the place where it is to be set up, the brother or son of the dead man mounts upon it. While the stone is being dressed and before its erection the members of the family take vessels of water and asperge it and the helpers. They ask the protection of *Zavahary* and the ancestors that the stone may not break. When the stone has been set up, the family begins to distribute cattle in the following way: one for the young women, one for the young men and one for the important people. After these have been killed and the meat distributed everyone returns home." The Ikongo erect only tall upright stones, identical with European menhirs, and place them wherever they wish, usually beside a road or on an elevation where they can be seen from a distance. The menhirs of an entire family may be grouped together, but this is rather rare. No sacrifices are offered at the menhirs.

Among the Menabe the erection of memorial stones is less frequent than among the Ikongo and they are not thought necessary for the peace of the dead person's soul. The stones may be of either of two types: menhirs, which are called *vato loky* ("male stones"), or tables consisting of a large irregular flat slab supported by three upright stones. The latter are called *vato vavy* ("female stones") by most of the groups, but the Zafindrianatrova sometimes refer to them as *alesio*, a term which the southwestern tribes of the island apply to memorial carvings placed on tombs. The *vato loky* are always raised to commemorate men, the *vato vavy* usually commemorate women, but may be raised for men if the family is poor or if no stone suitable for a menhir can be found. The three upright stones are said to symbolize the three stones set in a fireplace to support the cooking pots, hence the woman's half of the work and family. The use of *vato loky* appears to be very ancient, that of *vato vavy* somewhat more recent. An informant of the Zafiakotry gens says that they erected their first *vato vavy* when he was ten years old, i.e., about 1870. Both types may be erected anywhere, the relatives choosing the place they think the deceased would have preferred, but as a rule all the memorial stones of a village will be grouped together in a single sacred place. The two types are usually arranged in pairs, the table immediately to the west of the menhir, but each monument commemorates a different individual and those of a pair are rarely erected simultaneously.

The Zafimaniry say that in the most ancient times they used cut stones for their memorials, then lost the art of stone cutting.

At the present time their more pretentious memorials are of cut stone, Betsileo stone cutters being employed. Among the other gentes the memorial stones are almost uniformly rough or only slightly shaped. The largest Tanala menhir I saw was approximately 9 feet high, 3 feet wide at the base and 18 inches thick. The largest table was approximately 4 by 5 feet and 1 foot thick and raised 2 feet 6 inches above ground. The country of the Menabe is so broken and so heavily forested that the use of sledges for drawing the great stones is impossible. A large stretcher is made with two very long poles as thick as a man's leg and wooden crosspieces and on this the stone is lashed with vines. It is carried bodily by fifty or sixty men, others going ahead to cut a road. In a recent erection three hundred men assisted, carrying in shifts. When the menhir comes to the place of its erection a pit approximately the size of the base is dug and the stone laid beside it with the base overhanging. It is then levered up and blocked until it drops in. Then the blocks are tamped.

Memorial stones may be raised by the relatives of their own accord, or on the advice of an ombiasy, who tells them so-and-so desires a memorial, or by individuals in pursuance of a vow. The last method is the least frequent and such vows are only resorted to in times of great stress as when a beloved child lies at the point of death. The vow may be made anywhere, with or without witnesses, but is usually made publicly, in the kianja ("village square"). If one of the ancestors demands a *vato lahy*, either in a dream or through the medium of an ombiasy, the relatives will often ask for time, promising to erect it later, say after the next harvest.

There is no fixed time for the erection of the memorial stones. They may be raised at once, while the body still lies in the house, or several years later. If erected at once there is no sacrifice, as all sacrifices are forbidden while a dead body lies in the village, but an ox is killed as soon as it has been set up and the meat distributed. If the stone is raised some time after the death, one ox is sacrificed with the regular formula at the time that the cutting or transportation of the stone is begun, the priest praying that it may not break and that there may be no accidents. A second ox is sacrificed when it is set up. In either case the lungs of the ox killed after its erection is rendered down and the stone painted with the grease, the natives using crude brushes made from the raupon plant. Feasting and dancing continue while the stone is being transported and raised.

All the Menabe memorial stones are used as places of sacrifice, but they are never erected for the purpose of sacrificing to the gens

1: Linton 8-6 (1926-27) 1933 FYS Tanala FYS

ancestors as a group. Each stone commemorates a single individual who is invoked and sacrificed to there by his descendants. The largest combined vata *lahy* and vata *vavy* in the village sacred place are, however, employed for sacrifices to the ancestors as a whole. 769 764

ANCESTOR WORSHIP

PRAYER AND SACRIFICE

Prayer and sacrifice are inseparable in the native mind as all dealings with the ancestral spirits are conducted strictly on a basis of exchange. It is universally felt that prayer without sacrifice, or a promise to sacrifice, is useless. Moreover, the *size* of the sacrifice is, in general, proportional to that of the favor asked. An important request requires a large offering while a small one is enough for a small matter. 769 782

Tanala sacrifices fall into two classes: those addressed to the gods and ancestral spirits as a whole and those addressed to the spirits of individuals. The former are performed by priests or family heads and are public, the whole village, lineage, or family participating. They constitute a reaffirmation of the close bond existing between the ancestors as a whole and their descendants as a whole. The latter are performed by individuals and indicate that a relation has been established between one of the dead and one of the living. Sacrifices of this sort are usually small and are not felt to be of public interest, although anyone who wishes to may attend.

SACRIFICES TO THE ANCESTORS AS A WHOLE

Sacrifices to the ancestors as a whole fall into two classes: sacrifices performed in behalf of the whole community and sacrifices performed in behalf of individuals. The former are resorted to only in time of general calamity or to insure success in some communal undertaking, such as a war party. They are relatively infrequent. The latter are performed whenever an individual feels the need of supernatural assistance. Illness is the main cause and the one mentioned first by all informants, but such sacrifices also are made for success in business enterprises, safe return from journeys, or safe return from a war expedition.

PRIESTS.—All important sacrifices to the ancestors as a whole are performed by professional priests. Less important ones are made by heads of families. The priesthood seems to have been a direct outgrowth of the sacrificial functions of heads of families. 793 769

1: Linton E-6 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

both the loser's shoulders touch the ground simultaneously. The wrestlers display more strength than science and apparently there are no named gripe. Strangling or striking an opponent is considered unfair, but there are no other fouls and injuries are not uncommon. The bystanders act as umpire and will separate the contestants if they lose their tempers. However, the Tanala seem to have a fairly strong sense of fair play and the loser usually takes his defeat very good-naturedly.

The Tanala Menabe rarely do "catch as catch can" wrestling, preferring two milder forms of the sport. In one of these the contestants stand facing each other, seize each other round the waist, and try to trip each other. In the other, a man stands with his right arm extended and elbow bent, the clenched fist being held in front of his face. His opponent seizes the wrist with both hands and tries to throw him off balance. If he moves his feet, he loses the bout. This sport is also a favorite with the Betsileo. Both these forms of wrestling are indulged in at funerals, but simply as a part of the general jollification.

Boxing is almost unknown, although it is a favorite sport of both the east coast and plateau tribes. In this boxing, blows are delivered with a wide swing, not from the shoulder as with Europeans. Although the fighting looks clumsy, the blows arrive with great force and I have seen both bones of a man's forearm broken in attempting to ward one off. Fighting with the feet, which the Imerina have brought to a fine art, is quite unknown to the Tanala.

Bull baiting should also be mentioned among athletic sports, for it is regularly practiced at funerals and a good bull baiter possesses great prestige. A description of it will be found in the section on Domestic Animals.

Watching fighting bulls was a favorite amusement in ancient times, but seems to be rapidly becoming obsolete (see Domestic Animals). As far as I could learn, other animals were rarely pitted against each other. There is no systematic cock fighting here, although it was common among the plateau tribes.

There are a few games. Small children play a game with buttons or shells, etc., on a series of irregularly drawn connected rectangles. The pieces represent various members of a family: the husband, wife or wives, and the children. The husband is usually represented by a long, pointed object and the wives by round ones. Each piece represents the same individual throughout the game. The player moves them about the diagram at will, acting out long and com-